

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-38 have been amended and remain in the application. Reexamination and reconsideration of the application, as amended, are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-3, 5-7, 9-32 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Shirasaki. Claims 4 and 8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shirasaki. Claims 33-38 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shirasaki in view of Ranalli (U.S. Patent No. 6,285,500).

These rejections are respectfully traversed with respect to claims 1-38, as amended.

The present invention, as defined by amended claims 1-38, is directed to a system comprising a number of elements in combination. In representative claim 1, for example, the combination includes a processor to process at least one collimated input beam to produce multiple time-delayed output taps. Claim 1, as amended, recites that the processor is configured to maintain the collimation of the input beam so that the multiple time-delayed output taps maintain the collimation of the input beam. Claim 1, as amended, further recites that the multiple time-delayed output taps are spatially distributed, spatially distinct and independently phase shifted. Similar amendments have been made to all of the claims pending in the present application.

A similar combination of elements is neither disclosed nor suggested in Shirasaki. In particular, there is no teaching or suggestion in Shirasaki of a combination including a processor configured to maintain the collimation of an input beam so that multiple time-delayed output taps maintain the collimation of the input beam and so that the multiple time-delayed output taps are spatially distributed, spatially distinct and independently phase shifted.

The fundamental deficiencies with Shirasaki are not compensated for by the additional reference of Ranalli. There is no teaching or suggestion in either Shirasaki or Ranalli, alone or in combination, of a processor to process at least one collimated input beam which has been modulated with a data signal to produce multiple time-delayed output taps, the multiple time-delayed output taps being spatially distributed and independently phase shifted.


In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the outstanding rejection of the claims and to pass this application to issue. If it is

determined that a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number given below.

In the event the U.S. Patent and Trademark office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, applicant petitions for any required relief including extensions of time and authorizes the Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due in connection with the filing of this document to Deposit Account No. 03-1952 referencing docket no. 509622000700.

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Respectfully submitted,

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